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Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the first part of its 1998 session (New York, 18-29 May 1998)

Summary

The present report contains three draft decisions calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 70 non-governmental organizations which had applied;

(b) Reclassify one non-governmental organization from Roster to special consultative status.

By draft decision II, the Council would grant Roster status to eight organizations, pursuant to Council decision 1996/302.

By draft decision III, the Council would approve the participation of four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights established by the Council in its resolution 1995/32 to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

The attention of the Council is also drawn to Committee decision 1998/101 concerning the methods of work of the Committee and the Secretariat.

* E/1998/100.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decisions

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status:

General consultative status

African-American Islamic Institute

Al-Khoei Foundation

Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas Y del Caribe

Special consultative status

Action for Integrated Rural and Tribal Development Social Service Society (AIRTDS)

Advisory Commission of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

African Services Committee, Inc.

Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (ALAI)

Agir ensemble pour les droits de l'homme

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)

All-Russian Society of Disabled People

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

ANPED-Northern Alliance for Sustainability

Arab Women's Forum (AISHA)

Asian Alliance of Appropriate Technology Practitioners, Inc.

Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência (AMCV)

Association Algerienne de solidarité aux malades respiratoires

Association des études internationales

Association des femmes éducatrices du Mali (AFEM)

Association internationale des mouvements familiaux de formation rurale (AIMFR)

Association of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa, New Zealand

Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Small Scale Industries

Association pour la promotion de l'emploi et du logement (APEL)

Association to Aid Refugees, Japan (AAR, Japan)

Azerbaijan Women and Development Centre (AWDC)

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der senioren-organisationen (BAGSO)

Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, Inc.

BUSCO-Business Association for the World Social Summit

Canadian Federation of University Women

Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC)

Centre for Psychology and Social Change

Centre for Women, the Earth, the Divine

China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF)

China Society for Human Rights (CSHRS)

Christian Aid

Cohort for Research on Environment, Urban Management and Human Settlement (CREUMHS)

Collectif sénégalais des africaines pour la promotion de l'education relative à l'environnement (COSAPERE)

Comité catholique contre la faim et pour le développement (CCFD)

Comité national d'action pour les droits de l'enfant et de la femme (CADEF)

Couple to Couple League International, Inc.

Eagle Forum

EcoPeace-Middle East Environment NGO Forum

Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia

The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute

General Confederation of Trade Unions

Global Alliance for Women's Health

Group for International Solidarity (GRINSO)

Interfaith International

International Club for Peace Research (ICPR)

International Health Awareness Network

International Investment Centre

International Psychoanalytical Association Trust

International Union of Psychological Science (IUPSYS)

International Women's Writing Guild

International Women's Year Liaison Group

International Youth Foundation

IPAS

JMJ Children's Fund of Canada, Inc.

Ladies Charitable Society

Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights

Mercy Corps International

Miramed Institute

National Federation of International Immigrant Women Associations (RIFFI)

New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council

Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL)

Program for Research and Documentation for Sustainable Development (PROSUS)

Rainforest Foundation International

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Roster

Armenian International Women's Association

Armenian Relief Society

Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA)

(b) To reclassify one organization from Roster to special consultative status:

World Organization Against Torture

DRAFT DECISION II

Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302

The Economic and Social Council decides to grant Roster status to the following non-governmental organizations:

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

FORJA

Foundation for Global Community

Free Youth Association of Bucharest

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Rainforest Alliance

Scientific and Cultural Society of Pakistan

Shirkat Gah

DRAFT DECISION III

Applications from organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council for participation in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples

The Economic and Social Council decides to approve the participation of the following four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Council in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights, whose establishment was authorized by the Council in its resolution 1995/32:

Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East

Foundation of Aboriginal and Islander Research Action

Indigenous Initiative for Peace

Western Shoshone National Council

B. Decision brought to the attention of the Council

2. The following decision of the Committee is brought to the attention of the Council:

Decision 1998/101. **Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports**

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decides to adopt the following guidelines, which should be applied so as to improve the methods of work of the Committee and the Secretariat concerning quadrennial reports:

1. The Committee reiterates its decision that only quadrennial reports elaborated in accordance with its guidelines and submitted to the Secretariat no later than 1 June preceding the regular session of the Committee will be transmitted to it for consideration.

2. As soon as possible thereafter, the Secretariat will circulate to the members of the Committee a list of organizations that have submitted quadrennial reports in accordance with paragraph 1 above. The list shall include the name of the organization, its address, consultative status and the date on which consultative status was granted. The reports, in original form, shall be distributed to the members of the Committee. These reports shall be translated into all official languages of the United Nations, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1997/210, and issued in official form as soon as possible.

3. Members of the Committee will have until the first day of the regular session of the Committee to send in writing to the Secretariat their comments, reservations and questions on individual reports, or to signal their intention to do so. If the formal documentation has not been made available, this deadline will be extended appropriately. Thereafter, the Secretariat will circulate a list of quadrennial reports on which no questions have been received. Without prejudice to the right of any member of the Committee to pose questions, express reservations or make comments on any report at that stage, note could then be taken of the quadrennial

reports on which no comments have been made as early as possible thereafter at the regular session of the Committee.

II. Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

3. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 650th to 666th meetings, from 18 to 29 May 1998. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-4).

A. Applications for consultative status deferred from the 1997 session of the Committee

4. The Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, had decided to refer the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to the Committee for further consideration (Council decision 1995/305, subpara. (d)). At its 1996 session, the Committee had taken note of a letter from the organization stating that it would be appropriate for the Committee to suspend consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights, without prejudice, for one year (see E/1996/102, para. 5). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to its 1998 session. The Committee had also decided that the organization should be asked to provide the information requested by the Committee at its 1996 session.

5. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to its 1999 session.

6. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. to its 1997 session (see E/1996/102, para. 29). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. to its 1998 session.

7. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided not to recommend to the Council that the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. be granted consultative status in the light of information provided to the Committee that the organization's credentials had been suspended in the country in which it is based.

8. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of Eagle Forum to its 1997 session (see E/1996/102, para. 29). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Eagle Forum to its 1998 session.

9. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Eagle Forum be granted special consultative status. The representative of Costa Rica stated that her delegation, while willing to go along with the consensus decision of the Committee, nevertheless had reservations regarding the decision, and made the following statement:

> "My delegation maintains its view that the non-governmental organization Eagle Forum, given the position that was expressed by its distinguished representative, does

not comply with the criteria established in Council resolution 1996/31, that is, it does not contribute to the goals of the Council and other important organs of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"In terms of the credibility and prestige of the United Nations, my delegation feels that it cannot support an opinion that undermines the Convention on the Rights of the Child and that is contrary to the goals of UNICEF, which have been promoted for many years by its former Executive Director, Jim Grant, and its current Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, who have expressed their fervent wish that the universal ratification of the Convention be achieved. We have all supported this goal at the Third Committee when adopting relevant resolutions. But it is evident that what was indicated by the representative of Eagle Forum does not represent a positive contribution to the goals of UNICEF, an organization of the United Nations system that we all love and respect.

"However, if the Committee decides to grant consultative status to Eagle Forum, my delegation will not block a consensus decision by a negative vote. Let the Committee assume the responsibility. We will respect the decision and maintain our reservation."

10. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the World League for Freedom and Democracy to its 1997 session. At its 1997 session, the Committee had taken note of a letter from the organization asking that consideration of its application be deferred to the 1998 session.

11. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the World League for Freedom and Democracy to its 1999 session.

12. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Jewish Agency for Israel to its 1998 session.

13. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Jewish Agency for Israel to its 1999 session, following the receipt by the Committee of a letter from the organization asking for a deferral.

14. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Assyrian National Congress to its 1998 session.

15. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Assyrian National Congress to its 1999 session.

16. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of Humanity International to its resumed 1997 session. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of Humanity International to its 1998 session, not having received the clarifications that it had requested of the organization.

17. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided not to recommend to the Council that Humanity International be granted consultative status because it had failed to respond adequately to any of the questions posed by the Committee and its application did not contain enough substance to merit the granting of status.

18. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS) to its 1998 session.

19. At its 654th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee decided to recommend that the Council grant special consultative status to the Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS).

20. The Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I):

Special consultative status

Eagle Forum

Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS)

B. New applications for consultative status

21. At its 658th meeting, on 22 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council grant general consultative status to the Al-Khoei Foundation. The observer for Iraq expressed his delegation's reservations regarding this decision and made the following statement:

"Mr. Chairman,

"Although the decision already taken by the Committee to grant Al-Khoei Foundation consultative status was hasty and premature, my delegation pays full respect to it. It would have been better if due time and considerable attention had been given to the preoccupations and doubts raised by my delegation. But it appears that some delegates were insisting on giving a deaf ear to these arguments and doubts. This raises two serious questions. First, why did some delegates insist on granting the above-mentioned Foundation consultative status in this hasty and suspicious manner, while a great number of other non-governmental organizations' applications have been deferred from one year to another in order that the Committee might clarify the nature of their activities. The truth of the matter is that the same Governments that have been involved in acts of aggression against my country have insisted on the adoption of this hasty decision. This may confirm the doubts raised by my delegation that some members of this Foundation are involved in serious political acts that jeopardize the safety and security of my country as it has been expressed by my delegation.

"Second, Mr. Chairman, is the question of transparency, which has also been previously raised by my delegation. We think it is important to pay due consideration to the comments and proposals extended by the observer members, and we should never forget that an observer member will one day be a member of the Committee, and vice versa.

"Having said that, Mr. Chairman, my delegation would like to express its reservation again on granting Al-Khoei Foundation consultative status, and notes with regret that this decision will affect the credibility of the Committee. It would be appreciated if this intervention was recorded."

22. At the same meeting, the representative of Cuba stated that it would not like to join in the consensus.

23. At its 659th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Roster status be granted to Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia. Some delegations requested that the report reflect that, although they were willing to join in the consensus, they nevertheless held reservations regarding the recommendation of consultative status to this organization.

24. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to Action Health, Inc. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee decided to keep the application pending

following a request to this effect by an Observer State. The delegation of the United States disassociated itself from the decision for the same reasons expressed below regarding the application of the European Council of WIZO Federations.

25. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to the European Council of WIZO Federations.

26. At its 660th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee took up consideration of the application in the light of new information which was made available to the members of the Committee, and it was decided that the issue should remain pending until the second part of its session in June. The representative of the United States of America asked that the following statement be reflected in the report of the Committee:

> "The United States delegation expressed its view that the Committee had erred procedurally in deciding, in essence, to reopen its decision regarding the consultative status of the European Council of WIZO Federations at the Committee's June 1998 session, because no information had been presented to show that such a decision was warranted. Although the United States delegation did not block consensus, the delegate stated its strong objection to this action on the part of the Committee and disassociated itself from the decision."

27. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland stated that his delegation supported the position taken by the United States.

28. At the 665th meeting, on 29 May, the representative of the United States requested a roll-call vote on the proposal to recommend special consultative status to the Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL). The proposal was adopted by a roll-call vote of 7 to 1, with 5 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: China, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tunisia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

29. After the proposal was adopted, statements were made by the representatives of Cuba, China, the Sudan, India and the United States.

30. At its 661st meeting, on 27 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to the second part of its session in June 1998.

31. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Centre de Recherches, d'Etudes, de Documentation et d'Information sur la Femme (CREDIF) to the second part of its 1998 session.

32. Also at the same meeting, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights to the second part of its 1998 session, so as to allow the organization to respond to the questions posed by the Committee.

33. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the Union de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba to the second part of its 1998 session, following a request to this effect by the representative of Cuba.

34. The following applications were also deferred to the second part of the Committee's 1998 session since no response to questions posed by the Committee had been received:

Community Social Welfare Foundation

International Group of P&I Clubs

International Rescue Committee

Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme

35. The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council grant consultative status to 71 non-governmental organizations (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I).

C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the 1997 session

36. The Committee considered requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations, deferred from its 1997 session, at its 654th, 656th and 664th meetings, on 20, 21 and 28 May.

37. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of the World Organization Against Torture, an organization on the Roster, and decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council reclassify the World Organization Against Torture from Roster to special consultative status (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I).

38. The representative of Indonesia requested that the following position of her delegation and concern on this matter be reflected in the report of the Committee:

> "The Indonesian delegation still questions the reference to 'Timor Oriental' or 'East Timor' in the application of the World Organization against Torture, where East Timor is listed along with countries even though East Timor is not a country. And we have not found the explanation from the non-governmental organization for this reference to be satisfactory or convincing."

39. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of International P.E.N., an organization on the Roster, and decided to defer further consideration of this organization's request to the second part of its 1998 session, following the request of a delegation for additional time to study the information provided by the organization.

III. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the resumed 1997 session

40. The Committee considered item 4 of its agenda at its 654th, 664th and 666th meetings, on 20, 28 and 29 May. It had before it quadrennial reports for the period 1992-1995 on the activities of six non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that had been deferred from the resumed 1997 session.

41. The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of four non-governmental organizations deferred from the resumed 1997 session.

42. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial report of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations to its 1998 session.

43. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not yet been provided, decided to defer consideration of the report to the second part of its 1998 session.

44. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial report of Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies to its 1998 session.

45. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not been provided during the current session, decided to defer consideration of the report to the second part of its 1998 session.

46. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee, while taking note of the report of CARE International, had requested the organization to provide clarifications concerning references to "Chechnya" and the "Republic of Korea" (see E/1998/8, para. 61).

47. At its 654th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee took note of the clarifications provided. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that his delegation would prefer that the full name of "Chechnya, Russian Federation" be used.

IV. Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302

48. The Committee considered item 5 of its agenda at its 65th meeting, on 21 May 1998. It had before it an informal paper containing applications from non-governmental organizations that are currently on the Roster for the purposes of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development to expand their participation in other fields of the Economic and Social Council.

49. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council grant Roster status to eight non-governmental organizations (see sect. I.A above, draft decision II).

V. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304

50. The Committee considered item 6 of its agenda at its 654th, 657th, 658th, 662nd and 664th to 666th meetings, from 20 to 22 and 27 to 29 May 1998.

A. Quadrennial reports

51. At its 658th meeting, on 22 May, the Committee held a preliminary discussion on how to facilitate the processing of quadrennial reports. Statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, India and Cuba.

52. The Secretariat drew the attention of the Committee to the serious overload of work resulting from the unprecedented numbers of quadrennial reports and new applications for consultative status to be processed for the 1999 session of the Committee.

53. It was proposed that the Secretariat prepare a background paper outlining all of the problems associated with the processing of the quadrennial reports, including the proposals so far put forward by members of the Committee, among them the possibility of scheduling quinquennial reports or of seeking the Committee's decision on selective translation of reports prior to their consideration in session.

Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports

54. At the 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee adopted a decision entitled "Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports" (see sect. I.B above, decision 1998/101).

B. Accreditations issued to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

55. At its 658th and 664th meetings, on 22 and 27 May, the Committee considered the question of accreditations issued to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in the context of the size of representation allowed to individual organizations and the possible need for a code of ethics to govern their conduct.

56. At the 658th meeting, on 22 May, the representative of Cuba circulated an informal paper on the issue, emphasizing that its provisions were intended not to penalize organizations but to facilitate their participation, and that the suggested limits would ensure that all non-governmental organizations would have equitable opportunity for representation.

57. In response to concerns expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom, the Chairman confirmed the Committee's competence to address this issue under paragraph 61 (a) of Council resolution 1996/31, regarding the Committee's responsibility for regular monitoring of the evolving relationship between non-governmental bodies and the United Nations.

58. At the 662nd meeting, on 27 May, in a statement made on behalf of both its members and other non-governmental organizations, representatives of the Conference of

Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) questioned the need for establishing official limitations on the size of their organization's representation, stating that this could be better handled by the organizations themselves in cooperation with the chairpersons and organizing officials of the meeting in question. Regarding the proposed code of ethics, the representatives affirmed that whereas they were not opposed to this idea in principle, CONGO felt strongly that such a code should be formulated by the non-governmental organizations themselves. Finally, the representatives of CONGO strongly advocated the need for the establishment of regular and sustained consultations with the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

59. Statements were made by a number of delegations in support of the proposal for instituting regular consultations with a representative cross-section of non-governmental bodies, including those not in official relationship with the United Nations.

60. At the same meeting, upon the suggestion of the representative of Cuba, discussion of the issue was suspended pending further more broad-based debate on the subject.

61. The Committee decided to schedule consultations with non-governmental organizations in order to explore the issue further.

C. Other procedures

62. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee expressed the view that the discussion on the code of ethics criteria of non-governmental organizations, which had been initiated at its 1997 resumed session, should resume at the inter-sessional consultation with CONGO and other non-governmental organizations in June 1998.

D. Consideration of special reports

63. At its 1997 resumed session, the Committee had requested Liberation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Council, to submit a special report pursuant to paragraph 61 (c) of Council resolution 1996/31 (see E/1998/8, paras. 45 and 46).

64. At its 657th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee had before it an informal paper containing the special report submitted by Liberation.

65. At the same meeting, one delegation, considering the explanations provided by the organization equivocal and insufficient, requested further clarifications and a categorical apology for the incidents involving individuals with a criminal past accredited by this organization, which had taken place during the forty-ninth session of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the fifty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights, both held at Geneva, as well as clarifications on other issues raised by the incidents.

66. At the 664th meeting, on 28 May, having examined the additional information provided by the organization, one delegation felt that the response of the organization was unsatisfactory and did not contain the apology requested. A number of additional questions were posed to the organization for which the responses would be examined by the Committee at the second part of its 1998 session.

67. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the United States Mission to the United Nations concerning certain activities of the Pan-African Islamic

Society for Agro Cultural Development (PAIS), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Council.

68. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that a request for information would be conveyed through the Secretariat to this organization in order to give the organization an opportunity to explain its activities.

69. Pursuant to paragraph 61(c) of Council resolution 1996/31, the Committee also decided to request the organization to submit a special report to the Committee at its 1999 session.

70. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the Government of Colombia informing the Chairman of the Committee that two non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council had accredited several individuals known to belong to an armed revolutionary group in Colombia for participation in the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights at Geneva. The Committee was informed that the matter had been brought to the attention of the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

71. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that more detailed information on this matter should be provided both by the Government of Colombia and the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

VI. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32

72. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee, in accordance with Council resolution 1995/32, continued its consideration of applications from organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that are interested in participating in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights established by the Council to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

73. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council authorize four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Council to participate in the work of the working group (see sect. I.A above, draft decision III).

VII. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/50

74. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the International Lesbian and Gay Association addressed to the Chairman, in which the organization requested the Committee to consider reinstating its consultative status, which had been suspended by the Economic and Social Council in 1994.

75. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to ask the organization to submit a new application for consultative status, which the Committee would examine at a future session.

VIII. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

76. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations held the first part of its 1998 session from 18 to 29 May 1998. The Committee held 17 meetings (650th to 666th).

B. Attendance

77. The representatives of the following States members of the Committee attended the session: Bulgaria, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Madagascar, Paraguay, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

78. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, France, Italy, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine.

79. The following non-member State was represented by an observer: Holy See.

80. The following organization, having received a standing invitation to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly, was represented by an observer: Palestine.

81. The following specialized agencies were represented: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

82. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Chamber of Commerce, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (general consultative status); Amnesty International, Baha'i International Community, Human Rights Watch, International League for Human Rights (special consultative status).

C. Election of officers

83. At the 650th meeting, on 18 May, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation.

Chairman:
Wahid Ben Amor (Tunisia)

Vice-Chairmen:
Gautam Mukhopadhaya (India)
Sean McDonald (Ireland)
Emilia Castro de Barish (Costa Rica)

84. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee elected, by acclamation, Valentin Hadjiyski (Bulgaria) as Vice-Chairman.

85. At the 662nd meeting, on 27 May, it was decided that Mr. Sean McDonald (Ireland) would also serve as Rapporteur.

D. Agenda

86. At the 650th meeting, on 18 May, the Committee adopted the provisional agenda for its May 1998 session, as contained in document E/C.2/1998/1. The agenda is as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations:
   (a) Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from the resumed 1997 session of the Committee;
   (b) New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification.
4. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the resumed 1997 session.
5. Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302.
6. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304.
7. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32.
8. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/50.
9. Provisional agenda and documentation for the 1999 session of the Committee.
10. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

E. Request by a non-governmental organization for the inclusion of an item on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council

87. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had before it a proposal by the Transnational Radical Party, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Council, to include an item entitled "International auxiliary language" in the provisional agenda of the Economic and Social Council at its 1999 substantive session.

88. A number of delegations expressed the view that the matter should be presented to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It was also felt that the views of CONGO would be useful on this issue.

89. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to reject the request by the organization to place such an item on the agenda of the Council.

IX. Adoption of the report of the Committee on the first part of its 1998 session

90. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May 1998, the Committee adopted the draft report contained in documents E/C.2/1998/L.1 and L.2, and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize it in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex

List of documents before the Committee at the first part of its 1998 session

Document number	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/1998/43 and Corr.1	6	Work of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.2/1998/1	2	Provisional agenda
E/C.2/1998/L.1	10	Draft report
E/C.2/1998/L.2	10	Draft report
E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-4	3 (b)	New applications for consultative status: memorandum by the Secretary-General